

On His Head Are Many Crowns

by Rolfe Barnard

Rolfe Barnard's sermon emphasizes the necessity of total commitment to Christ in response to His love and sacrifice, highlighting the glory and authority He holds as the King of kings.

Duration: 54:02

Scripture: Isaiah 52:13, Isaiah 52:15, Revelation 19:11-15

Topics: "Surrender To God", "Salvation Now"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal story about his father and the impact of his faith. He emphasizes the importance of surrendering oneself completely to God and finding salvation in Him. The preacher urges the audience to give themselves fully to God, not just with their minds or wills, but with their entire being. He warns that time is running out and encourages the listeners to act now. The sermon concludes with a cautionary tale of a man who refused to yield to God's invitation and ultimately faced the consequences of his decision.

Transcript

Now this morning I'd like you not to turn to the Bible, I'd like you to listen as I try to read, and I want you to listen, not to read along with me. I'll have it work out. I want first of all to read in your hearing the Holy Spirit's description of the Lord Jesus Christ when he came as a man for us men.

I never try to read this that I do not recognize the other impossibility of fully entering in to the mystery of it, but I pray the Holy Spirit will just be very sweet to you as I read these blessed words. Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.

But before that takes place, something else. As many were astonished at thee. His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.

So he shall sprinkle many nations. The kings shall shut their mouths at him, while that which had not been told them shall they see. And that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Mystery of mysteries, who would believe it? For in the providence of God it is still true that he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and

acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him.

He was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. As for ourselves, we, like sheep, all of us have gone astray.

We've turned every one to his own way, and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is done, so he openeth not his mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him.

Jehovah hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, thank God he shall see his seed. He shall prolong his days, and the good pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand.

Then he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. And by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoiled with the strong, and all because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and because he was numbered with the transgressors, and because he bear the sin of many, and because he made intercession for the transgressors, saying, O barren, thou that did not bear, break forth in the singing, and cry aloud, Thou that didst not travail with child.

And then if you would like, I'd appreciate it if you turn to the 19th chapter of the last book of the Bible, and we read the Holy Spirit's description of the Lord of the universe. The next time he visits this old earth, he didn't receive very good treatment the first time. But look at the Spirit's description of him, when he comes trampling on the clouds of glory, with the armies of heaven in his wake, to take charge on this earth.

At verse 11 we read, And I saw heaven open, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself, and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God.

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. And he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. And I feel vitally his presence here this morning, that wonderful, worshipful singing.

I feel like taking off my shoes. I don't know whether I ought to try to speak a little or not. We don't need a Bible to tell us that there was a man named Jesus, born in a little town called Bethlehem, hung on a Roman gibbet outside the holy city of Jerusalem, buried in another man's tomb.

That's just a fact of history. Thank God we do need a Bible, and thank God we have a Bible to tell us this world didn't get rid of him, and that he's coming back under different circumstances for a different purpose.

I wouldn't venture to try to interpret the last passage of scripture I've read.

The older I get, the more dogmatic I am about just one thing, and that is him, and I hope my relation to him. But it is blessed to soak your soul now and then in victory, and praise God, victory is on the way. Our Lord Jesus Christ hasn't abandoned his mission.

He's sitting at the right hand of God now carrying on. Praise God. And one day his feet shall touch this earth again, and men will have not a man in humiliation, but a man in glory on their hands.

I want to just exhort you a little this morning with myself about one expression describing the glory, the majesty, the victory that shall be the portion of him who when he came the first time, wound up on a cross with his visage so marred that he didn't look like a human being. He must have looked like some sort of a monster by the time they got through with him. Here he comes back, praise the Lord, to get everything straightened out and turn a world that has been brought back into subjection to God.

Turn it over to the Father that the God may be all in all. One of the descriptions of him as he comes back in glory, on his head were many crowns. I don't know whether I have the proper interpretation or not, but I have a longing in my soul and a deep desire in my very being when I shall see him as he is and that's the way he'll be.

Oh, what a picture of him. And shall be made like him that I shall have a joy of finding out that one of the crowns, one of the many crowns on his glorious head shall have been placed there by myself. On his head were many crowns.

Men and women, boys and girls in this veil of tears have the glorious opportunity and privilege under God of putting a crown on the head of the despised and rejected and crucified Lord of Glory. By faith, when the world pays no attention to him, by believing God's testimony about him, there isn't any privilege like the privilege that came my way and has come yours. To put a crown on his head, not a crown of thorns, but the crown of me.

Mystery of mysteries, wonder of wonders, glory of glories, grace upon grace. For some reason that in 35 years of trying to study the Bible and preach, I still marvel more about it now than when I first began. For some reason, Jesus Christ wants you.

He wants you. He came down here to get you. Not your time, that already belongs to him.

Not your money, that's already his. Just came down here to get you. For some reason he wants us.

And to get us, he gave himself for us and he gives himself to us. He didn't send us a creed. He didn't send us advice.

He came himself. The gift of God is God himself in Christ. For some reason, he gave himself.

He identified himself. And I'll state my whole life on the statement I'm going to make now. That he doesn't ask of you anything on earth except you.

He just wants you. And salvation is the portion of a man or woman, boy or girl, who has responded to Christ's giving of himself for you by giving yourself to him. Salvation is more than leaving something.

Salvation is one giving himself for sinners. And the Spirit of God working on men and women until they give themselves to him. Saving faith is just the response of you to the giving of him.

Any response less than that is an insult to the glorious truth that in order to win you, he gives himself for you and gives himself to you. Amen? He wants you. He wants me.

Wonder of wonders. He wants me. And there's just one thing I can do.

I've got nothing to give him except the rod and a blasted. But he wants me. Somewhere between now and the time you die, fix it up about whether this has any reference to what you call salvation or not.

It'll make you happy. Some way, time before you go out to meet him, I hope he'll have you. I hope he'll have me.

You've heard it, have you? I'm sure you have. I repeat it. I repeat it.

The Jesus man, the missionary, preaching to an Indian tribe, and he preached and preached and preached. And the old chieftain heard him and heard him and heard him. And after a while, the old chieftain absented himself from the services and sat in his wigwam trying to digest what he'd heard from the missionary.

And as all truth demands response, the old missionary knew it was his move. And it's always man's move when he faces any gift, when he faces any truth and any probation. And the old missionary cogitated the old Indian chieftain.

Jesus gave himself for me. There ought to be some response. And he thought and thought and finally thought he had it.

He got up and oiled and fixed up his favorite hunting rifle. Until it was beautiful to behold and cradling it in his arms, he went to the missionary's tent. And he said, here Jesus man, you say Jesus gave himself for me? Me give him my rifle.

And the missionary said, no chief, Jesus no want your rifle. And the old chieftain shook his head, Jesus no want my rifle. No, Jesus no want your rifle.

And with his rifle in his arms, the old missionary went back to his tent, put it back up in the rack, and in tremendous perplexity sat down to try to come up with response that was proper to the message that Jesus had given himself. And after some time he got the most prized possession he had. He got his favorite hunting moccasins.

He took his towel or whatever it is and he fixed them up beautiful, cradling them in his arms like this, like a little girl with a doll. He went again into the presence of the missionary and he said, Jesus, missionary man, you say Jesus gave himself for me? Me bring my rifle. You say Jesus no want my rifle? Me bring my moccasins.

Me give them to Jesus. The missionary man said, no chief, Jesus no want your moccasins. He returned in deep distress to his tent and stayed there without making a public appearance for two days and nights.

Then he came into the presence of the Jesus man and he said, Jesus man, me bring my rifle. You say Jesus no want. Me bring my moccasins.

You say Jesus no want. Me bring me because Jesus want me. And the Jesus man said, yes chief, Jesus want you.

That's what he came down here to die for, to get you, to bring you to him. Want you, he got you. It will challenge you every day of your life.

Does he have me? Do you? Does he have you? And the glory and the majesty and the mystery and the wonder of it is that he'll woo you, that he'll command you, that he'll invite you, that he'll influence you, but in this day he will not make you against your will. Bring yourself. The crowns that will be on the head of kings will be men and women willingly, men willing if you please, but willingly.

Say I am Lord. You want me. What you want me, I don't understand, but here I am.

Praise God. He came down here to get you. He came down here to get me.

And the only difference between this hour and the hour of power, he's seeking men and women who will willingly worship him. Now one day you'll have to. Now bless God you can.

I want to just bring three words of excitation just to buy everybody under the sound of my voice, the preacher included, and I do it many, many times. It never gets too old and it's never out of order under God. If Christianity is a way, this I'm to talk about this morning is vital.

I want to say that you ought to give yourself in wholehearted response. You turn yourself over lock, stock and barrel to the Lord Jesus Christ to do with you as he pleased to lead you, to control you, to guide you for his sake. Under God, if I knew how with my own self and with everybody whom I preach, I wish we'd be done with fiddle-faddle and I wish we'd come up one face again.

The Bible is either God's truth or it isn't. We ought not to trifle with it. Jesus Christ is either the divine son of God and yet all man who left heaven and came down here for us men to bring us to glory.

These things are true and they are not. Under God, if Jesus is what the Bible says he is, under God, if Jesus did for us what the Bible says he did, he's worthy of me. See, I tell you it's an insult to offer anything else except me.

It's an insult to have a kind of religion whereby you give a nice little sum of money and give him a little of your time and once in a while think of him, but that's an insult. The only thing that's worthy of the Lord Jesus Christ's person and his glorious work is the response of Ralph Barnard wholeheartedly. Here am I. Here am I. He's worthy of you.

He's worthy. Hallelujah. We sing a little chorus as I go about the country.

Only he is worthy. Let us praise him. Only he is worthy.

Let us praise him. And that's so. He is worthy of me committing myself.

And I know of no form of Christianity in the Bible that doesn't call for a new committal every day of your life. I believe that as thy days, so shall thy strength be. And I would lift up my voice against this stuff, this little convenient stuff they call Christianity, that doesn't confront you daily with the demands of the living Christ who is the Lord of all.

And say to you, this is the way. Walk ye in it to wait for the day. He's worthy.

What he wants with us is a mystery to me. But he'll settle not for some of your time, not for some of your affection, not for some of your faith. He'll settle for you.

And if he can't have you, he won't play. He's after us. He wants us.

And he's worthy of us. I've always had a horror of nice people that have some nice beliefs. I tell you, the Bible brings us face to face.

It's so or it isn't so. The only response is like the little dog, little witty, but the boy said he had a dog and his name was Rover. And when he died, he died all over.

And the Bible brings us to one of two positions that at least is reasonable. One is an all-out response to Christ. Or the other is to say there's nothing to it.

But an in-between attitude is a lukewarmness that is a stench in the nostrils of a holy God. I remember walking across the campus of Southwestern Seminary years ago. I ran smack into Hyman Appelman, a Jewish preacher, some of you have heard of him.

He and I were schoolmates together and he was crying as he walked across the campus and he said, I got some time, come up to my room, just let me talk to you. And I went up to his room and he told me this experience that last week was the most grueling week of my life. He said, my old Jewish daddy came down from Chicago and got my home out in Victor, Texas, 50 miles from Fort Worth, where Hyman was a student pastor.

And he said, my daddy stayed in my home Monday night and left Friday afternoon, about dark. And he said for that week, instead of staying in my room here, I drove each day into the school and back at night. And he said, my old daddy, talk to me.

And he said to Hyman, of course Hyman when he accepted the Lord Jesus as his Messiah and Lord and Savior, he was banished from his home. And he, last time I'd seen him, had never been in his mother and father's home for 30 some odd years. But at that time, Hyman hadn't been saved too long.

Now he's in school, in a school, trying to learn how to preach. And his old daddy wouldn't let him come home because that was against, he had of course insulted and disgraced the religion of his father, the faith of his father and mother. And his old orthodox Jewish home was barred to him.

But the old daddy got on a train and came down to visit with his boy. Hyman said, Ralph, he never said an unkind word to me the four days he was in my home. And he said, when I'd get home from school, about three, four o'clock in the afternoon, my daddy would be waiting for me.

And he said, we'd begin a conversation, but soon my daddy would forget the conversation. And he called me by my Jewish Russian name, I can't pronounce it. Yeah, Hyman happened to be his firstborn son, and that's precious to a Jewish family, born in Russia, Jewish parents.

And he'd say, Hyman, my firstborn, mama sent me down to bring you home. Hyman, mama's kept your room ready for you. She goes in and airs it, cleans it up once a week.

Nobody's slept in your bed all these years. Nobody's occupied your room. Hyman, mama's grieving herself to death the way you've done.

Hyman, give up your Jesus and come back home. And Hyman said, I'd have to get up and run out and go out in the yard. He said that went on for four days.

My dear old daddy loved me. He's a good man. And he talked to him as much as he could about other things, but he'd always, in our conversation every day, get around to that same conversation.

He said I came in Friday afternoon from school, only a few minutes before I had to take daddy to the train. And he said my daddy down in the front room had his suitcase packed and his overcoat and hat over on the chair. And I got his hat for him and his coat, and he put on his hat, and I pepped him into his coat, and I reached down to get the suitcase, and I had my hand on it.

My daddy hugged me, just caught me on the wires, and hugged me in his giant embrace. Just with his arms about me in that position holding on to his suitcase, he said, Hyman, I'll buy the ticket you can send for your clothes. You haven't got time to pack now, but Hyman, it'll kill mama if I come home without you.

Hyman, give up your Jesus and come back home. Hyman said, Ralph, I had to do this, disengage my daddy's arms, and I reached down and got the suitcase out into the car we went. We drove up to the depot and got out, down where the train would pull up, and in about a minute, Garrett came.

He said, I put daddy's suitcase up in the vestibule of the car. He kissed me goodbye, and I kissed him goodbye. He put his right foot up on the step and his right hand on the rail, and I thought I'd said goodbye, and then he turned with a beat of lightning and crushed me in his embrace one more time.

Hyman said, Ralph, he just sobbed like his heart would break, and he said, Hyman, give up your Jesus and come back home. Hyman said, Ralph, once again I had to, by means of strength and awkwardness, take my daddy's arms from around me, and I held them pinioned to his side. While I held his arms, I looked into his pierced, stained face, and I said, Daddy, I may be a Jew, but I am not a dog, and Jesus loved me enough to die for me.

And I love him enough to give myself to him. Ladies and gentlemen, there isn't any difference between a Jew and a Gentile now, in anything short of responding to the love of Christ. By giving ourselves to him, I tell you it just won't be.

He's worthy. Thank God he's worthy of you, and you'll settle for nothing less. In the second place, I bring a word of exhortation, men and women, boys and girls, and I'm speaking to people here this morning, that ought to give yourself in just humble, simple faith of committal to Jesus Christ for your loved one's sake.

Only God knows the heartache of a parent for a child that continues to flaunt the grace of God and continues to walk in ungodliness. Only God knows the heartbreak of a wife who's got a husband that thumbs his nose at the Lord Jesus Christ. And more and more wives tell me of husbands they can't even talk to about.

And more and more broken-hearted parents say, how have we failed? Where did we miss it? Where's my wandering boy tonight? And the heartbreak of God's people over a loved one's flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone. Boys and girls and men and women ought to yield to Christ, if for no other reason than to mend the broken heart of loved ones. And I went from Southwestern Seminary out to New Mexico to be

a pastor.

Sam Fletcher was the chairman of the Board of Deacons. And for some reason he took a shine to me. And he had a lot of money.

He was a big businessman. And I was just a kid. And he went out of his way.

I never had a human being this side of eternity could think up as many ways to be nice to his pastor. He seemed to just love me. Oh, he just did everything.

And about six months after I'd been there, after I went there, I got on the telephone early one Monday morning. I called his secretary and I said, I want to speak to Sam. And she said, he's very busy.

I said, I know, but I won't speak to him. And she got him on the line. She said, Preacher, I'm terribly busy.

I said, I know. But I want an hour of your time today. He said, Preacher, I just can't give it to you.

I said, yes, you can. I want an hour of your time today. I got something I want to ask you.

He said, could you tell me about it on the phone? I said, no, Sam, I want an hour of your time today. You're a pastor. I want you to give it to me.

And he said, well, let me look. I said, all right, can you be at my office? I said, yeah, I'll be there and you'll be ready. And I went there.

And I sat down in his office. He told the secretary not to disturb him. And he said, what's on your mind, Preacher? I said, I've come to ask you a question.

He said, what is it, Preacher? I said, Sam, do you know the Lord? He said, I'm pretty sure that's the question you're going to ask. And then he began to weep. He said, Preacher, I think you know.

I don't know the Lord. I said, how did you get in this? He said, I don't know. I made a profession of faith and I was sincere.

Then they made me chairman of the board of deacons. And I got very prominent and said for these years there's been hell in here and hell in my home. Hell everywhere.

But I've been too proud to walk an aisle and tell the church at which I was the chairman of the board of deacons that I was a stranger to the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, Sam didn't know about his wife that had been calling on him. About the times wife and I had gone to see her when she was almost at the breaking point.

She'd say, Brother Barney, I can't go on. You don't know what hell goes on in our home. The children are afraid of their daddies.

Just one series of hell after another. He said, I just can't stand it. I can't.

And I'd say, let not the believing wife depart from the unbelieving husband if you can. Stick it out a while longer and we'll keep building the firearms and prayer and preaching if we can. And the crisis came on Sunday night after the preaching service.

The little wife had come and said, Brother Barney, the wretched up breaking point's come. I just can't stand it any longer. God must give me some relief.

And one morning I called him. And in that office, I believe he surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ. When he got up off his knees, I said, get your hat, Sam.

He said, where are we going? I said, get your hat, Sam. And he followed me and we got in his car. He said, where are we going? I said, we're going to your home.

And he drove to his home. We came up on the front porch. He opened the front door, went in the front room, and he cupped his, he burst his lips and said, Mary, I'm home.

I want to see you. And Gary was surprised. Wife busy about the household duties.

Came and said, what you doing here now, Sam? He said, I brought the preacher. And I said, Sam, talk to your wife. And Sam told his wife what had taken place.

And he said, honey, I hope you'll give me another chance. Under God, I'm a new man. I'm a new man.

I'll never forget that little woman. She looked at my face with the agony of years of going through heartbreaking hell because of an unbelieving, Christ-denying husband. She looked in my face and she said, preacher, can I believe it? And I said, I believe you can.

I believe you can. And then the pent up agony of the years, forth, forth, and in a heartbreaking stop, she said, oh, thank God. And they were in the other's arms.

And when they'd embraced and rejoiced a little together, I said, Sam, call your kids. And he had a 13-year-old boy and a nine. And when they got in, I said, Sam, talk to your boys.

And he talked to them. And when he got through, the 13-year-old boy looked into my face and again he said, preacher, is it true? And I said, yes, I think it is, son. And he ran to embrace his daddy and while they were embracing, I heard somebody sobbing and talking and I looked him down on his knees in the corner was the little nine-year-old boy.

And over and over again he said, thank you, Lord, thank you, Lord, thank you, Lord, now I won't be scared when Daddy comes home again. Thank you, Lord, thank you, Lord. Oh, my soul, nobody knows how many kids can't make good grades in the school because they're living in hell at home.

Nobody knows! This is the heartache that families have that are divided over the Lord Jesus Christ. I tell you, for love's sake, you ought to give yourself lock, stock and barrel. Well, ain't I saying you ought to forget it? He came down here to get you.

Turn yourself over to him. And in him, you will find salvation. I bring another word of exhortation to you.

You ought to give yourself well, not something of your mind, but just give yourself. I don't want an act of your will, an act of your affections, an act of your mind, I just want an act of you, the whole kit and capoodle of you, Lord. Here I am, here I am, here I am, with all there is to me.

I say an eternal yes by the presentation of myself to your eternal gift of yourself. You ought to do that for your own sake, for your own sake. Time's a-wasting, time's a-wasting.

You're running a battle between the ravages and the power and the cords of sin and the certainty of death. Time's a-wasting, time's a-wasting. On Easter Sunday, years ago, in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, the meeting was to come to close that night and we had a lower floor and two balconies and we'd had a great meeting and being Easter Sunday and the last day of the meeting the thing was packed out, balconies and all.

And I stood up to preach, I fooled around a little bit trying to get something to say while I looked and finally I found my man is an old man 74 years old. And the pastor and I had been dealing with him all during the meeting. He heard me preach and we'd go to see him at his home.

We'd get out on our knees and pray with him, pray for him. He'd get up off his knees in his home and I'd ask him to surrender to Christ and he'd say, I can't, I can't. The last Sunday morning of the meeting he'd come, he'd got there late, he wanted to get as far away from me as he could and I finally spied him up in the second balcony in the extreme corner on the last row of seats just as far away from me as he could get.

There he sat during the process of the service. We stood for an invitation and I couldn't help it. I left the pastor with the invitation and people were coming.

The entire length of the auditorium down to the steps. Walked up the steps to the first balcony then the steps to the second balcony. Made my way to that last row.

Asked the people to excuse me and they did and I waited in there and put my hand on the shoulder of that old 74 year old man and I asked him one more time if he would surrender to my Lord and he looked me in the face there were tears there in his eyes and he trembled in his old age and in his conviction and he said preacher I can't I can't of course you're saying I can't simply means I won't but that's what he said that's what he said you can't give yourself faith but all hell couldn't stop you from saying yeah I am Lord what you want from me I don't know but I'm on your hands from now on I don't guarantee God will save you he don't have to save you whether he ever saves you or not he's your Lord you could respond to that couldn't you sure you could the gospel of grace says that he saves people who do that but that's beside the point and the old man for the last time has proved as he is invited to yield to God's Son through his tears he said preacher I can't if you want to take that and go to hell with it nobody will keep you from it he did that afternoon at 3 o'clock he was dead and out yonder in the hands of a God whose testimony he had refused to rest upon for 74 long years for 74 years there had been a controversy between that man and almighty God and God kept saying this is my Son this is the Son of my love in whom I walk please hear me hear this is the one whom I set upon my holy hill this is the Lord of glory this is the Savior of sinners receiving and receiving means to submit to and the old man lived 74 years on God's earth and the last response he ever gave to an invitation to agree with God about Jesus Christ he said I can't and he died he was stricken that afternoon he didn't attend the service that night he attended a session in the hands of almighty God who invites and commands helpless sinners to respond to him on his testimony sink or swim live or die survive or perish I will arise and go to Jesus and the grace of it is he will embrace me in his arms he wants you dear one he wants you he came for you died for you will you give yourself to him will you we're going to give you a chance to do it publicly do it right now and then I want you to do it again tomorrow and then again the next day he gave himself for you he wants you for your sake crown him now and be saved crown him later and be damned but the crowns on his head when he comes back before he comes back starts judgment will be crowns willingly placed on his head will you crown him huh? will you? let's stand and sing we will sing

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